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News Release

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Washington, D.C. -- As the result of an internal investigation, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA) recently discovered more than 1,000 pieces of mail that had been delivered to the Board, but had not been processed. The mail ranged from several days to more than a year old.

"Veterans depend on BVA to provide a fair hearing on their claims, and this is absolutely unacceptable," said Eligah D. Clark, chairman of the BVA. "We are taking immediate steps to notify the affected veterans and their representatives. While this one instance does not point to a system-wide failure, we must assure the people who depend on us that their cases are reviewed completely, and that decisions are made on all the information we should have before us."

BVA staff are evaluating the information in the mail to determine whether it includes evidence that could have due process implications or would change the outcome of a Board decision. Those cases will be reopened and readjudicated.

The states from which the mail originated are:

- Illinois
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- Nebraska
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- South Dakota
- Wisconsin

The Board is working with VA's Inspector General on an extensive investigation into this matter.